

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! GREETINGS, GHOULS! AH, THAT'S THE WAY... JUST SHOVE THE BODIES ASIDE AND MAKE YOURSELVES MISERABLE HERE IN *THE CRYPT*, WHILE THIS COLD-BLOODED CHARACTER, YOUR CANTANKEROUS *CRYPT-KEEPER* READIES A SPINE-SPLITTING SAGA FROM MY FOUL FILES IN THE *CRYPT OF TERROR*! THIS MISERABLE MESS OF MORBIDITY IS THE NIGHTMARE OF A DELIRIOUS DREAMER WHO, POOR DEVIL, KEPT LOSING HIS HEAD OVER THE SAME WOMAN! I CALL THIS DOLOROUS DIARY OF HEART-RENDING CONFUSION... TOLD BY *EMIL* IN HIS OWN WORDS...

CHOP TALK!



"THE PEOPLE OF BERLIN HAD DESERTED THE PARK THAT RAW DECEMBER DAY. THE LEAFLESS, SLEEPING TREES... THE FORSAKEN BIRD-NESTS... THE HARD, FROZEN EARTH LAYING LIKE A DEAD WOMAN AWAITING A SNOWY SHROUD... ALL GAVE ANNA AND I THE PRIVACY FOR A RENDEZVOUS..."

THIS IS *GOODBYE*, ANNA? THEN LET US HAVE A *FAREWELL KISS!*

I *MEAN* IT THIS TIME, EMIL! I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!



"I'D HAD THIS BUSINESS BEFORE WITH ANNA. SHE'D SAY WE WERE THROUGH... BUT THE NEXT DAY SHE'D COME CRAWLING BACK TO ME! THIS TIME, HOWEVER, THERE WAS A COLDNESS, A *FINALITY* IN HER VOICE... THAT I FOUND HARD TO BELIEVE..."

ANNA, YOU *DON'T* MEAN IT! YOU'LL COME *BACK* TO ME... LIKE *ALWAYS!*

NO, EMIL! I'M GOING TO TELL MY HUSBAND *EVERYTHING!* I'M GOING TO BEG HIS FORGIVENESS! HE *LOVES* ME!



DON'T TALK LIKE A FOOL! YOU COULD *NEVER* GIVE ME UP! YOU... *OW!*

IT'S OVER! CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND? WE'RE *THROUGH!*



"I DON'T KNOW WHY OR HOW I SUDDENLY BECAME SO ENRAGED! BEFORE I REALIZED WHAT I WAS DOING, I GRABBED THE SCARF-ENDS AND DREW THEM TIGHTLY ABOUT HER THROAT..."

ALL RIGHT, ANNA... THEN IT'S *OVER!*



"A MOMENT LATER SHE SLUMPED TO THE GROUND... AND STILL I TWISTED THE SCARF TIGHTER EVEN THOUGH I HEARD THE HEAVY POUNDING OF FEET BEHIND ME..."



"HUGE, POWERFUL HANDS YANKED ME AWAY FROM THE LIMP BODY AND SPUN ME AROUND! A GREAT FIST SLAMMED AGAINST MY HEAD WITH THE FORCE OF A SLEDGE-HAMMER!"

WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE* TO HER? WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE* TO MY *WIFE!*?



"DIMLY, I SAW THE MAN CRADLE ANNA IN HIS ENORMOUS ARMS. VAGUELY, I REALIZED THAT HE WAS *HEINRICH...* ANNA'S *HUSBAND!* THROUGH THE THROBBING ACHE IN MY HEAD, I HEARD HER MOURNFUL SOBS... AND SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, I TRIED TO CRAWL AWAY..."

ANNA... (SOB) MY ANNA! WHERE HAVE I *FAILED* YOU?



"I HAD HARDLY GONE FIFTEEN FEET WHEN THE GREAT BRUTE WAS UPON ME, PULLING ME UP AS IF I WERE A RAG-DOLL! I COULD SEE THE HATE DEEP IN HIS TEAR-REDDENED EYES... THE LIVID SCAR ON HIS CHIN..."

I COULD *KILL* YOU, MISTER!
I COULD SNAP YOUR FILTHY NECK
WITH ONE HAND... BUT THERE
WILL BE A *WORSE* WAY...
I *PROMISE* YOU!

YOU... YOU SHOULD
THANK ME! SHE...
SHE WAS *NO GOOD!*



"HEINRICH SLAMMED HIS CALLOUSED PAW AGAINST MY MOUTH! MY LIPS BECAME NUMB AND SWOLLEN ALMOST AT ONCE, AND I COULD FEEL WARM BLOOD FROM WHERE THEY WERE TORN, TRICKLING DOWN MY CHIN..."

LIAR! MY ANNA IS DEAD! I HAVE NOTHING TO LIVE FOR NOW... NOTHING BUT TO SEE YOU *SUFFER AND DIE!*



"I CAN HARDLY RECALL THE FRIGHTFUL FANTASY OF MY TRIAL. HEINRICH WAS THERE, STARING AT ME! I TRIED NOT TO LOOK AT HIM, BUT I FELT HIS SMOULDERING EYES ON ME EVERY AGONIZING MOMENT..."



"I WAS FILLED WITH RELIEF WHEN I AT LAST RECEIVED MY SENTENCE..."

... AND ON A DAY CONVENIENT TO THE HEAD WARDEN, YOU, EMIL VOIGT, WILL BE PUT TO DEATH...



"IN MY CELL I THOUGHT OF MY DEATH AND IT SEEMED UNREAL... IT COULD NEVER HAPPEN TO *ME!* THEN, ONE DAY..."

EMIL VOIGT! YOU HAVE
A *VISITOR!*



"I RECOGNIZED HIM AT ONCE BY THE BIG SCAR ON HIS CHIN, AND THOSE HATE-FILLED EYES THAT GLARED THROUGH THE SLOTS IN HIS EXECUTIONER'S MASK..."

HEINRICH!
YOU... YOU
ARE THE
EXECUTIONER?

ANNA DIDN'T TELL YOU ABOUT MY
JOB, EH? BUT DON'T TREMBLE SO!
YOUR TIME HAS NOT COME... *YET!*



I HAVE TO EXECUTE A MAN IN A LITTLE WHILE, SO I CAN ONLY SPARE A FEW MINUTES! HAVE YOU EVER *SEEN* AN EXECUTION, VOIGT? LET ME *TELL* YOU HOW IT *GOES!*

NO... *NO*, I
DON'T *WANT*
TO HEAR!
GO *AWAY!*



"MENTALLY, I TRIED TO DEAFEN MYSELF, BUT HIS WORDS BURNED INTO MY BRAIN. I FOUGHT NOT TO LOOK, YET I COULD NOT TEAR MY EYES FROM THE GLEAMING, RAZORED AXE..."

I SPEND THE NIGHT BEFORE HONING MY AXE SO IT WILL BE OVER QUICKLY FOR THE DOOMED MAN... *UNLESS IT HAPPENS TO BE SOMEONE I DON'T LIKE!* THEN I AM HAPPY TO WASTE THREE OR FOUR STROKES TO *PROLONG THE AGONY!*



"I COVERED MY EARS... AND STILL I HEARD..."

...FIRST I GO TO MY VICTIM'S CELL, AND IN MY MOST SOMBRE VOICE, I CALL HIM! SOMETIMES HE WILL WALK WITH ME... OTHER TIMES HE WILL BE DRAGGED, CLAWING AND SCREAMING!



... AND AS YOUR HEAD TUMBLES INTO THE WAITING BASKET, BEFORE THE DARKNESS CLOSES IN, YOU'LL SEE YOUR NECK... GHASTLY RAW FLESH, SPLINTERED BONE, THE RED BLOOD GUSHING OUT...!

STOP IT! STOP IT!



IT IS SOMETHING FOR YOU TO *THINK* ABOUT, VOIGT! WHEN YOUR TIME COMES, YOU'LL KNOW I'LL ONLY BE THINKING OF *ANNA*, AND HOW *LONELY* I AM, AND HOW GOOD IT WILL BE TO *JOIN* HER... AFTER I HAVE FINISHED WITH *YOU!*



"I FELL UPON MY BUNK IN A COMA-LIKE SLEEP, EXHAUSTED BY THE HORRENDOUS EXPERIENCE TO WHICH HEINRICH HAD SUBJECTED ME..."



"I DID NOT KNOW HOW LONG I SLEPT, BUT SUDDENLY, THROUGH THE MIST OF MY UNCONSCIOUS, I HEARD HIS VOICE CALLING ME. HE CALLED AGAIN, LOUDER..."

COME, EMIL VOIGT!

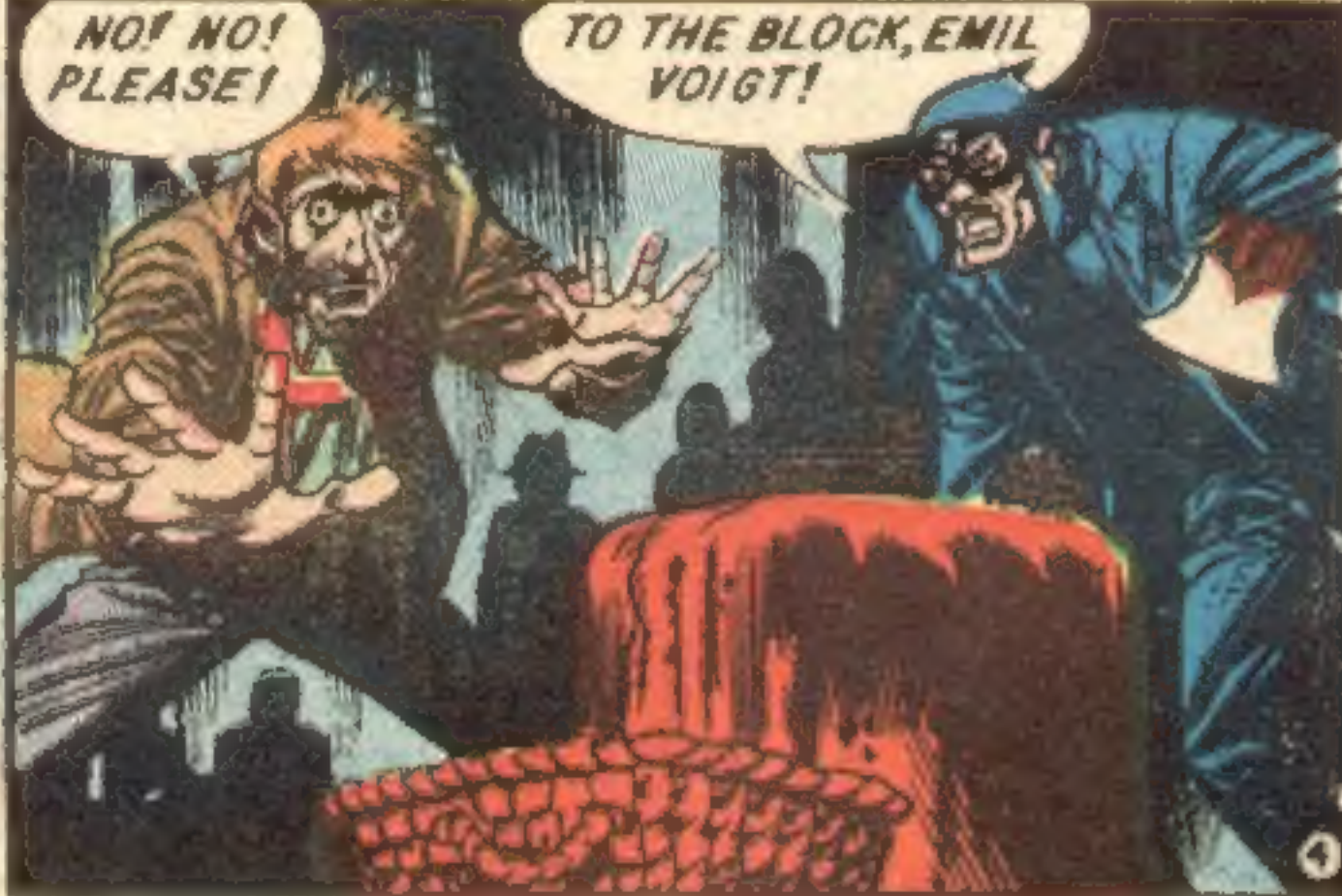
IS... IS IT (GASP) NOW?



"MY INSIDES QUIVERED LIKE COLD JELLY, AND MY LEGS WERE RUBBERY BENEATH ME, BUT I WAS FIERCELY DETERMINED NOT TO SHOW HIM MY FEAR. NOT TILL I LAID EYES ON THE BLOODSTAINED BLOCK... NOT TILL *THEN* DID I WEAKEN..."

NO! NO! PLEASE!

TO THE BLOCK, EMIL VOIGT!



"HEINRICH BRUSQUELY SHOVED ME DOWN ON MY KNEES AND ADJUSTED MY HEAD ON THE BLOCK! I GLANCED UP AND SAW THE MIGHTY SWELLING OF HIS BICEPS AS HE RAISED THE AXE! IT GLINTED IN THE SUNLIGHT..."



"IT WAS DULL, THAT BLADE, AND THE BLOW BADLY AIMED! I COULD HEAR HIM LAUGH, THROUGH MY AGONY, AS HE BROUGHT THE AXE DOWN AGAIN AND AGAIN... AND I WOKE UP FROM THE SOUND OF MY OWN SCREAMS!"



"I WAS FRIGHTENED. THE NIGHT-MARE HAD CLEARLY FORTOLD THE AGONIES I WOULD ENDURE AT HEINRICH'S HANDS, AND I WAS POSSESSED WITH DREAD..."



"HAD I KNOWN I WOULD DREAM AGAIN, I WOULD NEVER HAVE SLEPT THAT NIGHT..."



"HE SEIZED MY CHAINS AND DRAGGED ME, STRUGGLING AND SCREAMING, THROUGH THE CORRIDOR OF THE DAMNED..."



"I RANTED AND KICKED EVERY STEP OF THE WAY! TWO ASSISTANTS WERE NEEDED TO HOLD MY HEAD DOWN TO THE CHOPPING BLOCK...EVEN AFTER THE FIRST BLOW OF THE DULL BLADE..."



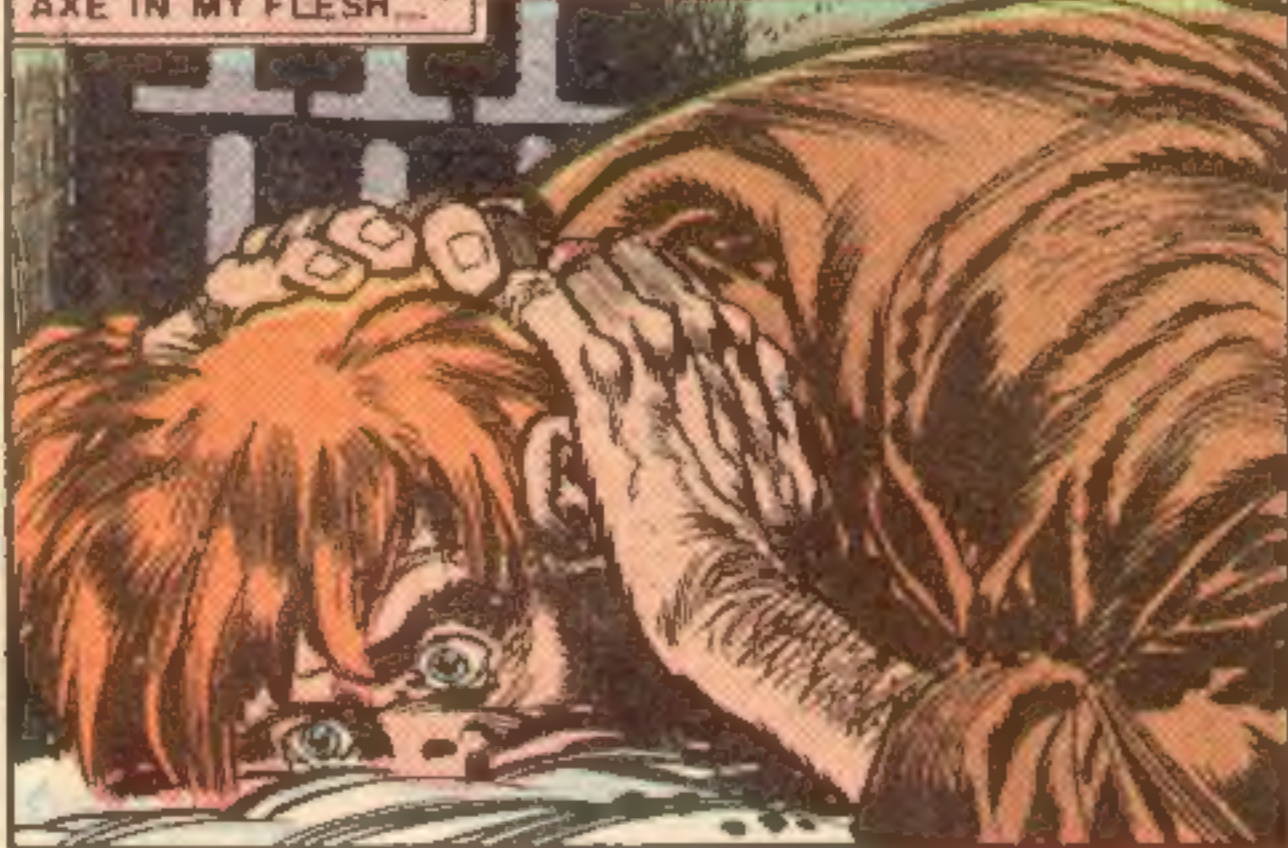
"AGAIN I AWOKE SCREAMING! SWEAT BEADED MY SKIN... AND THE BACK OF MY NECK ACHED! TREMBLING, I TRIED TO LIGHT A CIGARETTE..."



"THE DAYS AND NIGHTS PASSED ENDLESSLY IN A WHIRL OF HORRIFYING NIGHTMARES...AND THOUGH I FOUGHT TO STAY AWAKE, MY WAKING THOUGHTS OFFERED NO RELIEF..."



"I LIVED IN AN HYSTERICAL DELIRIUM, HARDLY KNOWING WHEN I WAS CONSCIOUS, BEING AWARE ONLY OF HOW I WAS LED TO THE BLOCK TIME AND AGAIN! I WAS TOO NUMB TO FEEL FEAR...I COULD ONLY FEEL THE TERRIBLE BLOWS, THE CRUSHING OF BONES, THE CHOCK OF THE AXE IN MY FLESH..."



"INSIDE I ACHED FROM THE TORMENTS OF MY REPEATED DREAMS. I LONGED FOR DEATH...SWEET UNKNOWNING, UNFEELING DEATH..."



"I PRAYED FOR DEATH! I WELCOMED IT WITH OPEN ARMS FOR I KNEW IT WAS THE ONLY MEANS OF MY ESCAPING THIS TORTURE..."



"AND THEN AT LAST, IT WAS TIME..."

COME, EMIL VOIGT! AT LAST! IT WILL BE OVER SOON!



"I WALKED TO DEATH WITH A SMILE. I WAS HAPPY KNOWING THIS WAS THE REAL THING! HEINRICH SAW MY JOY, AND HE SCOWLED AT ME IN SPEECHLESS FURY..."

YOU LOSE, HEINRICH! YOU CAN'T HURT ME ANYMORE! IN A FEW MOMENTS, I'LL BE FREE OF YOU!



"IT WAS SOMETHING I HAD NOT COUNTED ON OR HOPED FOR... HEINRICH LOST HIS TEMPER! HE BROUGHT THE GREAT AXE DOWN WITH ALL HIS MIGHT! ONE QUICK, SHARP PAIN... AND IT WAS OVER!"



"DO YOU THINK ONE DOES NOT KNOW WHEN HE HAS
CROSSED THE BARRIER? I KNEW. I KNEW HEINRICH
LIFTED MY HEAD FROM THE BASKET, AND THAT HE WAS
INFURIATED BECAUSE HE COULD HURT ME NO MORE..."

IT WAS TOO EASY, VOIGT!
TOO EASY, DO YOU HEAR?



"I KNEW WHEN THEY SEWED MY HEAD BACK ONTO MY
BODY, AND WHEN THEY CARTED ME OFF IN AN OLD WAGON,
WHEN THEY BURIED ME IN AN UNMARKED GRAVE, I KNEW
WHEN HEINRICH EMPTIED THE POISON DOWN HIS BULL-
LIKE THROAT..."

I'M COMING, ANNA! I'M COMING!



"...AND THEN I HEARD THE VOICE, THE SAME VOICE, THE
TERRIBLE, HAUNTING VOICE I HAD HEARD SO OFTEN..."

"IT WAS A CALL I COULD NOT RESIST. I ROSE TO ANSWER
IT...AND FACED HIM...HEINRICH, MY EXECUTIONER..."

COME, EMIL
VOIGT!



COME, EMIL VOIGT!

NO! (GASP!) NO! NO!



"...AND I REALIZED NOW THAT I WAS TO SPEND AN ETERNITY PAYING,
OVER AND OVER AGAIN WITHOUT END, FOR ANNA'S MURDER..."

HEH, HEH! A WEE BIT ON THE GORY SIDE,
EH, KIDDIES? YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT THAT
EMIL HAD A HEAD FOR BUSINESS...HEH...
MONKEY BUSINESS! WELL, IF YOU'RE
STILL IN THE MOOD FOR MORBIDITY,
STICK AROUND...V.K.'S READY WITH MORE,
SO TOODLE-BOO FOR NOW!



THE
END

